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3d Mt. Rushmore

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# Philately

## 3¢ Mount Rushmore Stamp

Excerpts from newspapers and other  
sources

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Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

# LINCOLN LORE

Bulletin of the Lincoln National Foundation - - - - - Dr. Louis A. Warren, Editor  
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August 11, 1952

## A LINCOLN PORTRAIT ON A COMMEMORATIVE STAMP

Twenty-five years yesterday President Calvin Coolidge rode on horseback to the foot of Mount Rushmore from his nearby summer camp and formally presented Gutzon Borglum with a kit of tools at which time the artist began work on the most famous of America's sculptural creations. In memory of this event the Post Office Department prepared for issue on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the occasion a commemorative stamp bearing the likeness of Borglum's colossal sculpture which contains stone portrayals of the faces of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln.

Inasmuch as Aug. 10, the actual anniversary day fell on Sunday, the first day ceremonies for the release of the stamp were scheduled for August 11. Keystone, a small hamlet of South Dakota's Black Hills country, has the honor of placing its postmark on the first day covers prepared for the occasion.

The memorial stamp was first suggested by M. B. Chilcott, a North Dakota newspaper editor. The stamp is of the standard commemorative size, arranged vertically and of three cent denomination. It is printed in green and features the Borglum figures in their Mount Rushmore setting. In the lower right hand corner are the figures of a woman and child gazing at the sculpture. Also in the lower right of the stamp is a legend: "Mount Rushmore National Memorial 1927-1952." At the top is the line "U. S. Postage 3¢" and at the bottom, "Black Hills, South Dakota."

Gutzon Borglum, already known to students of Lincoln sculptural art when he began the Mt. Rushmore project, had created the Lincoln heroic bronze at Newark, New Jersey which is still accepted as the finest of the informal studies of Lincoln. Here the President seems to have moved over on the bench where he is seated to make room for the children, irrespective of color, who literally crowd around him. The colossal head of Lincoln by Borglum in the rotunda of the nation's capitol is known to all visitors to Washington and replicas appear in other cities.

The feature after all of the Mt. Rushmore creation is its gigantic size. The head of Lincoln for instance is three times larger than the head of the famous Sphinx of Egypt. The head of Lincoln is 66 feet from chin to crown and the nose is 18 feet long. The mountain of stone which provides the background for the engaged portraits contributes tremendously to the enormous piece of pagentry carved in rock. This seems to be man's most ambitious effort to perpetuate the heroes of his own generation into the vast future.

Possibly, Stone Mountain in DeKalb County, Georgia, sixteen miles east of Atlanta may have suggested the Mt. Rushmore project. Here Mr. Borglum as early as August 17, 1915 made a trip to the mountain and found the stone of satisfactory quality for sculptural designs. The year before, Atlanta Chapter of the Daughters of the Confederacy had drawn some resolutions with respect to utilizing the mountain for a massive memorial to the

Confederate cause with special prominence given to the memory of Robert E. Lee. Borglum visualized the military forces of the Confederacy carved on the mountainside embracing as many as 1,200 characters. After he had chiseled out the 20 ft. head of Lee however, some misunderstanding between the sculptor and the sponsors caused him to be replaced by another artist.

It was not until 1924 that Doane Robinson proposed "converting a group of Black Hills Needles into massive and spectacular figures of sculpture." In his talk he referred to the Stone Mountain project in Georgia. Mr. Borglum was invited to visit the Black Hills and Mt. Rushmore was selected for the contemplated undertaking. A congressional act which became effective July 1, 1925 authorized the South Dakota interests to proceed if their project would not interfere with the administration of the Harney National Forest and also that "the United States shall be put to no expense."

In the meantime Mr. Borglum began working on his models and from the first subscription of \$2,500 to the enterprise \$1,000 of it was turned over to the sculptor. The first sizeable subscription, \$5,000, came from Mr. Charles E. Rushmore of New York for whom the mountain had been named forty years before. Other large gifts were received and the work was started, as already mentioned, on August 10, 1927.

Borglum was born in Idaho in 1871 and as a western man his whole energy was put into this masterpiece. For fourteen years Borglum labored on the Mt. Rushmore mountainside and by February 1, 1941 the actual work on the faces had been completed, but there was still much to be done on some other parts of the memorial. On February 17 Borglum became a patient in Henrotin Hospital in Chicago and died there on March 16 of a heart ailment.

Always a great admirer of Abraham Lincoln, Borglum named his only son for the Emancipator and it was Lincoln Borglum who brought the Mt. Rushmore work to its conclusion. The Lincoln head was separately dedicated on September 17, 1937 and Borglum was undecided for a while whether to show Lincoln with a beard such as he wore during the Presidency or to reveal the smooth face Lincoln of the Illinois years. He finally decided on Lincoln as the chief executive.

The entire panorama in stone is called America's Shrine of Democracy with the portraits of the four men who contributed most to the fundamentals of the American way of Life. Someone has identified the quartet of statesmen in their relation to the nation as follows: "George Washington who founded it; Thomas Jefferson who documented it; Abraham Lincoln who preserved it and Theodore Roosevelt who revitalized it."

Possibly at no time in the past has there been a greater need for the nation to turn to Mt. Rushmore than now. The work of Gutzon Borglum may help to tide us over another crisis in which the storms of socialistic ideology seem to be beating against our weakened national structure.



# Shrine of Democracy in South Dakota's Black Hills Will Mark 25th Anniversary This Year

By HOADLEY DEAN

Keystone, a hamlet in South Dakota's impressive Black Hills, will gain philatelic distinction Aug. 11 when its postmark will be applied to first day covers of the 3¢ stamp commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Mount Rushmore National Memorial.

Keystone, an early day gold mining camp in the Black Hills, is located a short distance down the valley from Gutzon Borglum's gargantuan sculpture of the faces of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt on the granite face of Mount Rushmore.

The memorial, which has been called "America's Shrine of Democracy" is a major tourist attraction in an area which each year brings more than a million vacationists to South Dakota.

From a distance the pine covered mountains appear black, hence the Indian name "Paha Sapa" or "Black Mountains." The Sioux Indians, a prairie tribe, believed Paha Sapa to be sacred. It was here that the game upon which they depended for food, clothing and shelter sought refuge from the winds which swept the adjacent broad plains.

The discovery of gold in 1874 on French Creek near the town of Custer, only 20 miles or so from Mount Rushmore, set off the last frontier stampede in history. The nation was smarting under depression and when Horatio Nelson Ross, one of the force of Gen. George A. Custer, found the shiny particles in his gold pan, a mad scramble for riches started. When a strike was discovered many a town sprung up overnight, became a thriving city and then just as quickly vanished as the gold peters out.

Deadwood to the north became the hub of all gold activity when nuggets were discovered in Deadwood gulch. Nearby, the lode which today has been developed into the world's largest gold mine, the Homestake, was found. Upon the streets of Deadwood were such characters as Wild Bill Hickock, Poker Alice, Calamity Jane, Deadwood Dick and a host of others who left their niches in the development of the west.

The year was 1876 and Deadwood was booming. Also in that year the Sioux, rightfully incensed over the white man's taking of their beautiful Black Hills, met Custer at the battle of the Little Big Horn and defeated him. But that was the beginning of the end for the mighty Sioux nation.

The Black Hills continued to boom as its mineral deposits were discovered and mined. The Indians engaged in sporadic raids on the settlers. Preacher Henry Weston Smith was killed enroute to conduct services at Crook City. Charles Nolin, a pony express rider, was scalped near Sturgis. The remnants of Custer's command gathered at Ft. Meade and the Sioux were gradually pushed onto reservations.

It was in 1887 that a young New York lawyer, Charles Rushmore, came to the Black Hills to look after a client's mining claim. Near the town of Keystone he asked the rough miner who was

driving his buggy the name of a large granite uprising. The miner is reported to have replied, "It ain't got no name but from now on we'll call the damned thing Rushmore." So the chance remark of a frontiersman named a mountain that through ages was destined to bring new inspiration in the ideals of freedom to thousands upon thousands of persons.

For it was here that world-famous Gutzon Borglum, the sculptor, decided to carve the faces of four great American heroes. It was here that Borglum fought an unceasing battle for funds to blast and carve from solid granite what today has been termed "man's most flamboyant attempt to preserve his heritage."

The gigantic undertaking depicts the conception, preservation and progress of Democracy in America. Thousands of persons have already thrilled at the message which it carries. Federal statute provides that no charge may ever be made for spectators.

It took Borglum 14 years (and he died before the work was finished) to give the world the Mount Rushmore National Memorial. His son, Lincoln, who helped on the project, finished the work in the fall of 1941.

Work began in 1927 when the late President Calvin Coolidge who was vacationing in the Black Hills rode on horseback to the foot of the mountain and in appropriate ceremonies, banded Borglum the tools and told him to go to work on his carving.

That was on August 10, 1927 and that is the event commemorated this year. However, because Aug. 10 is a Sunday, first day ceremony will be held the following day.

The visitor to Mount Rushmore and the Black Hills today will find things much different from the Indians, the gold seekers, Charles Rushmore and even President Coolidge. For, while nothing has been done to spoil the breath-taking natural beauty of the Black Hills, the traveller will find modern highways to take him to within easy view of Mount Rushmore. These same highways open new vistas of enchantment in this verdant virgin wonderland of pine trees and granite spirals.

If the visitor approaches Mount Rushmore from the south over the picturesque and winding Iron Mountain road he will find that engineers have thoughtfully provided him with sights he will not soon forget. For the road, as it winds over the mountains, passes through a series of tunnels which give the motorist a view of the faces framed as if in a picture.

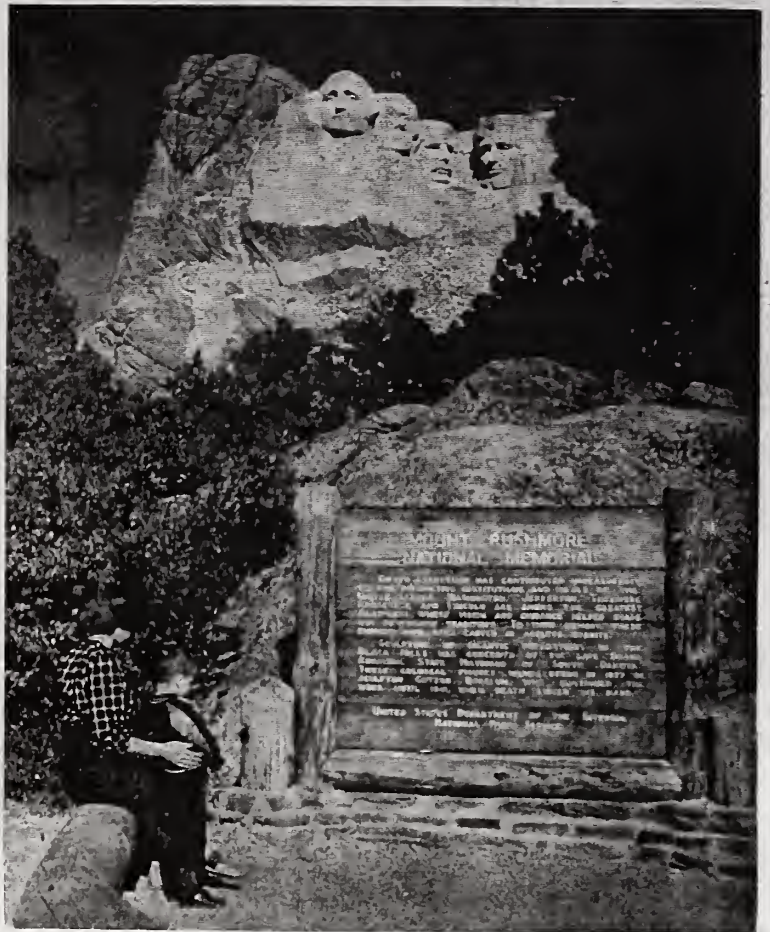
But Mount Rushmore is but one of many attractions in the Black Hills.

Near Custer is the Crazy Horse Memorial which is being carved by Korczak Ziolkowski, a Polish sculptor who worked on Mount Rushmore. Crazy Horse was a revered Indian who was never defeated in battle. Ziolkowski's work will be larger, even, than Mount Rushmore. His 663-foot high monument to the Indian will show him astride his stallion, charging into battle. Ziolkowski expects to spend a total of 30 years at this undertaking.

To the north is Spearfish where Christus portrayed Josef Meier three nights each week during the summer, stages the Black Hills Passion Play. Presented in an open air amphitheater this gripping presentation of the last days of Christ on earth is a never-to-be-forgotten thrill.

Meier who brought the Passion Play from Germany when Hitler became oppressive is in charge of the program at Mount Rushmore on August 11.

More than a million persons visit the Black Hills each summer. Last year it was estimated that 1,800,000 vacationists enjoyed the various sights and attractions. Outstanding among them, of course, is Mount Rushmore, which will continue to carry its inspirational message long after the 1874 gold rush or the B-36 base at Rapid City have been forgotten.



This photograph, supplied by the Black Hills and Badlands Association of Sturgis, S. D., was used by designers at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing in the creation of the 3¢ commemorative to be placed on first day sale Aug. 11 at Keystone, S. D. to mark the 25th anniversary of the Mount Rushmore National Memorial.

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## SOURCE OF DESIGN IN JERUSALEM

A bronze statue of St. Helena which stands above the altar in the underground chapel of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem is reproduced on the 2 shillings 6 pence value of the pictorial series which St. Helena issued April 23, 1934 to commemorate the centenary of British colonization. The series was printed in London by Bradbury, Wilkinson & Co.

## EMERGENCY ISSUE

The red-orange variety of the 3¢ stamp of Newfoundland's 1897 series was an emergency printing made during World War I by the American Bank Note Co. from an old plate pending receipt of supplies of the then-current 3¢ stamp from England.

Greece issued three commemoratives Aug. 1, 1927 for the centenary of the Liberation of Athens from Turkish occupation.



This is the design which will appear on the Mount Rushmore commemorative, and shows how stamp designers adapt a photograph of a scene for use on a stamp.

Nigeria's first pictorial series was the King George V set issued May 1, 1938.

The 1921 air mail stamps of the Netherlands were designed by Christian Lebeau.

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### Lincoln Stamp

The 25th anniversary of the Mt. Rushmore National Memorial was commemorated by a special 3¢ stamp. The color selected for this issue is green and the initial printing order called for 110,000,000 stamps. As the sixteenth president is one of the four characters portrayed in the Gutzon Borglum sculpture, Lincoln philatelic collectors will want a quantity of these stamps.

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